

A

REVIEW

OF THE

STATE

OF THE

BRITISH NATION.

Tuesday, January 29. 1712.

THIS is an Age of Difficulties; he that can steer safe among the Rocks which lie in his Way now, must bear a steady Hand, and may pass for a good Pilot ever after; I do confess there are some Things necessary to this Work, which I am very ill provided with, I mean Dissimulation, renouncing of my Principles, betraying Trusts, forsaking Friends, and a world of Cutting and Turning, which he that can be an honest Man, and go thorough, has more Skill than Human Nature can furnish him with.

Here we learn to call our selves Friends to the *Dissemers*, and yet sell them to the

High-Flyers; profess ourselves full of implacable Aversions, and yet talk of Charity; affirm what we know not, and boast of Truth; give up Priviledges to preserve Constitution; bring Innovations into *Scotland*, and call ourselves *Presbyterians*; and part with Clauses confirm'd by the Union, in order to observe our Treaty with the *Scots*.

Now the Happy Days are at Hand, when Episcopal Rabbles are Solicitous to prevent *Presbyterian* Rabbles by a Law; and thereby, the better to colour their Insulting the Establish'd Church in *Scotland*; and which Way shall an Author willing to let you

you into the Secret of these Things, speak plainly and clearly, and not Ruin himself for his Honesty ; especially an Author, who those that are serv'd in it, would be willing to see lost in serving them ?

But I shall not decline for the Danger ; I had the Honour to have my Hands deep in the Union ; her Majesty was pleas'd in her Speech to the Parliament at the passing it, to say these Words relating to the Union, and to those who were Concern'd in it.

I make no doubt but it will be remembered and spoke of hereafter, to the Honour of those that have been Instrumental in bringing it to such an happy Conclusion. Vid. Queen's Speech to Parliament, *March 6. 1704.*

As long as *England* keeps Sacred the Conditions of this Treaty, I shall be fond of owning I was any Way Instrumental in bringing it to such a happy Conclusion, and shall Claim my little Share, in the Honour her Majesty mentions.

But if ever that wretched Day shall come, that *England* should break Faith with their Brethren, and do any Thing in Contravention to this Union, what others may do I know not, but I shall for my part, be ashamed, Repent, and count it my Reproach that I was any way Instrumental to bring that Treaty to so fatal a Conclusion, and desire to forget the Day that I was sent thither.

Let no Man think that by this, I suggest, that the Parliament will in any Thing destroy the Union, or break their Agreement so lately, and with so Solemn and Sacred a Procedure made with *Scotland* ; I hope they will be very tender of any appearance of it — If any Man asks me what I say to a Bill now brought in to the House ; for Repealing a former Act about the Church, and Licensing the Common Prayer in *Scotland*, for that is the Question I expect, my Answer is short ; let the Enquiring Enquirer obtain for me a Liberty to

speak my Mind freely in print upon that Head, and I will do it — In the mean Time, I shall not forbear speaking what I think of those, who without Doors are carrying on a Design to destroy not the Church of *Scotland* only, but to destroy the Peace of both Kingdoms, and even the Union itself, without any Reflection on what the Houses are doing ; and if I make this out, I hope it may give a light to some within Doors, to see the Rocks which other People would have them split upon.

In the mean Time, one Thing I hope I may hint, even to the House itself, without Offence, relating to the Bill now depending, to prevent the disturbing the Episcopal Meetings in *Scotland*, &c. And it is this ; That they would be pleas'd to consider at the same Time of some Clause, more effectually to prevent the Tumults and Rabbles, Barbarities and Inhuman Behaviour of the Episcopal People, in disturbing the Assemblies and Judicatories of the Establish'd Church, as well as to prevent the other disturbing the Meetings of the Episcopal : In vain are all the Clauses and Acts of Security to the Church of *Scotland*, the Recognizing them, as the true Protestant Religion, in the Act of Union, and Incorporating those Acts into the Union, if the Episcopal Dissenters there, shall, with Impunity, Rabble and Insult the Judicatories and Assemblies of the Church, so Legally Establish'd ; but of this hereafter.

I come now to speak to the Episcopal People themselves in *Scotland*, who now pretend to seek a Toleration there — Much might be said on this Head ; as particularly to those who will take the Oaths and pray for the Queen, more Toleration was granted before, than any Dissenters in *England* had the Face to ask — Near a sixth part of all the Churches in *Scotland* being Possess'd by Episcopal Men, who enjoy the Livings, Stipend, Mans, and Glebe, and the Presbyterians sit down and Preach under them in Meeting-Houses, and for the Proof of this, I refer to a little Pamphlet, call'd *Presbyterian Persecution Examind* ;

wh'd : a Book long since publish'd by Mr *Nash*. Clipp'd in the *Post*, where you have their Names, and the Names of the *Parish*es set down.

But now we are to have the Common-Prayer set up in *Scotland* ; a blessed Attempt ! What a medley of Divisions are we going to sow there ? Who are they that will embrace this New Worship there ? — Not the *Episcopal Dissenters*, they all have their Meetings now, as freely as may be, and not one in five, no, not one in ten, use the Common-Prayer ; not the *Jacobine Non Jurant* Meetings, not one in ten of them meddle with it, or will meddle with it.

In the Time of *Episcopacy* there, they had none of it, nor do any of the common People now use it, comparatively speaking, except a few High-Land Tyrants, who can command their Slaves to serve God or the Devil, as they direct ; these thinking thereby to make their Court to the *High-Flyers* in *England*, are the Men who are setting up the Common-Prayer in *Scotland*, and they soaly, except, as hereafter excepted : And would these Men desire an Act of Parliament to prevent the *Presbyterians* disturbing the Common-Prayer ? I'll scatter that Cloud, that Mist shall blind no-body's Eyes here any longer — They seek not that Law to prevent, but to foment the Mischief they talk of ; the Charge is *black and horrid*, but just and clear.

And let Time manifest the Truth of what I affirm ; God forbid should suggest that our *Parliaments* can have any such Thoughts ; neither, I believe, is the Thing known to them, and therefore I speak it that Men may beware : In *Scotland* the Thing is evident, the Plot is open, the Net is spread, even in the Sight of the Bird ; it is not a New Thing there ; it is not a Plot just now hatch'd, tho' this be the unhappy Juncture that they think to draw the *English* into it.

Protecting the *English Liturgy* is the Popular out-side ; I tell you Gentlemen, Mobbing, Rabbling, and Insulting the *English Liturgy* is the Design — This is what

they aim at, what they covet, and what they hope will be the Consequence, and therefore upon this Act, if such an Act should pass, they will immediately find out the Tools to Employ and set them up to read their Liturgy, where it is a Monster, a terrible gashy Monster, in the Eyes of the People ; where they have only heard of it, but have not seen it, and hate the Name of it, as *Thousands* among us do *Papery*, hardly knowing whether it be a Man or a Horse.

The People there are Conscientious, Zealous, and abhorers of Innovation ; and these Men know they will as soon suffer the *Scarlet-Whore*, as a *Man in a white Surplice*, to read his Prayers in a Book ; upon this they depend, and expect Violences and Opposition, that is the Design ; and then they think they shall Embark the Government on their Side, Embroil a poor Zealous and Upright People with their Laws, and then, according to former Custom, they must be Ruled by *Dragoons*.

It is too true, that in this *Wicked Design* they are not deceiv'd, the *Devilish Policy* is too well Founded ; for those poor People will Resist you all, make what Laws you will, if against their Conscience, and will tear them to pieces ; and if you will prevent it, I know but one Way, and that is a Black one, I mean *Extirpation* : King *Charles II.* and King *James II.* destroy'd first and last above 10000 of them on this very Account, by all the Execrable Ways in the World, Barbarous as the first Ten Persecutions ; and they Conquer'd the very Cruelty of the *Dragoons*, by the Patience and Constancy of their Suffering ; and this was the very Way they did it, just as they would have it now, viz. First to make Laws they know the poor People would die, rather than obey, and then put them to Death.

Let our Members of Parliament be pleas'd but to satisfy themselves, and ask any of the Northern Members who may be the forwardest to push on this Design, Whether they believe the poor People in the West of *Scotland* will not die at their Doors rather than obey such a Law ? And if they do believe

lieve it, What can they desire such a Law to do?

Let them ask whether the Episcopal Party in *Scotland* really desire they should obey it, or rather that they should not obey, but Resist, that they may be Destroy'd? with what Face can such Men desire a *British Parliament* to make a Law with a Design it should be broke? What Blood? What Cruelty? What Desolation is in this *Wicked Design*?

For this Cause, I would most humbly Represent this one Thought to the Parliament now Sitting, that if possible, no Law may be made, that will, in its meer Consequence, bring the People of *Scotland* into Tumults and Blood.

I am prompting no Disturbances, I am Vindicating no furious Zeal; I am not Defending the Attempts which I say will happen; but I know, and it may be prov'd, that all the Attempts of Introducing the

English Liturgy into *Scotland*, that have been made there, have been to court Violence and Tumult, and if possible, to Involve that part of the Nation in Blood; and I see evidently, that they promise themselves the same Harvest now: *Greenfield's Attempt* was evidently so, and other Instances there are not a few; if after this, the *English Nation* will push on the Design of Planting their Liturgy in *Scotland* by a Law, a Thing so often and so fatally Unsuccessful before, I cannot but with this plainness and honest Freedom, say what I think will be the Consequence, viz. That it will either Ruin the Establish'd Church of *Scotland*, or Ruin the People that Attempt it: God grant our Parliament Wisdom and Discerning to know and guide themselves in a Case so nice, That *Scotland*, who is as it were yet Bleeding at the Old Wounds of Persecution, may no more fall into Blood and Disorder. Amen.

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